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(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB99/02101 (22) International Filing Date: 1 July 1999 (01.07.99) (30) Priority Data: 9815135.0 14 July 1998 (14.07.98) GB (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): BP CHEMICALS LIMITED [GB/GB]; Britannic House, 1 Finsbury Circus, London EC2M 7BA (GB). (72) Inventors; and (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): FROOM, Simon, Frederick, Thomas [GB/GB]; 11 Beast Fair, Snaith, East Yorkshire DN14 9JQ (GB). HODGE, Stephen, Robert [GB/GB]; 12 Sage Close, Beverley, East Yorkshire HU17 8WH (GB). PACYNKO, Witold, Franciszek [GB/GB]; 6 Danesway, Beverley, East Yorkshire HU17 7JQ (GB). (74) Agent: SMITH, Julian, Philip, Howard; BP International Limited, Group Patents & Agreements, Chertsey Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex TW16 7LN (GB).		(81) Designated States: AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published <i>With international search report.</i>
(54) Title: ESTER SYNTHESIS (57) Abstract <p>This invention relates to a process for the production of lower aliphatic esters which comprises reacting a lower olefin with a saturated lower aliphatic monocarboxylic acid in the vapour phase in the presence of a heteropolyacid catalyst, characterised in that: a) the reaction is carried out in a plurality of reactors set up in series; and b) the feedstock is rendered substantially free of metallic or metal compound impurities prior to being brought into contact with the heteropolyacid catalyst.</p>		

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